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Author(s): Roland G. Kent

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# CAMERON'S OLD PERSIAN READINGS AT BISITUN RESTORATIONS AND NOTES

ROLAND G. KENT

University of Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia, Pa., U. S. A.

Scholars and scholarship will always be in debt to George G. Cameron for his definitive reading of the trilingual inscriptions at Bisitun. I personally shall always be most grateful to him for permitting the use of many of his new OP readings in my Old Persian Grammar, Texts, Lexicon, even before he had himself put them in print—as also for this opportunity to present a supplement to his own complete record of his new OP readings. His achievement lies in reading many characters invisible to Rl. and KT, and in invariably recording the length of the gaps where nothing is legible, as well as in specifying that at certain places there were gaps lacking inscribed characters.—I speak from the inscriptional standpoint only; he had other discoveries in view which he mentions in his article and which he successfully made.

I seek here to fill in the illegible gaps which he left unfilled in his record, and to add a running commentary, without repeating what I was able to place in my book. The texts will be given in the customary normalized form, except when the sign-by-sign transcription is required for the discussion.<sup>1</sup>

## COLUMN 3, lines 88–92:

88 ..... : ra-  
89 *ucabiš* : *θakatā* : *āha* : *avaθā* : *avam* :  
    *Arxam* : [*hya* : *Nab*] *uku* [*dracara* :  
    *duruxta*] *m* : a-  
90 *gaubat* [*ā*] : *utā* : *marti* [*y*] *ā* : *tyaišaiy* :  
    *f* [*ratamā*] : *anuš* [*iyā*] : *āhatā* : *agarb*]-  
91 [*āya* : *niyaš*] *tāyam* : *ha* [*uw*] : *A* [*r*] *xā* :  
    [*u*] *t* [*ā* : *mar*] *iyā* : *tyaiša* [*i*] *y* :  
    *f* [*ra*] *tamā* : *an*]-  
92 *uši* *yā* : *āhatā* : *Bābira* [*u*] *v* :  
    [*u*] *z* (*ma*) *yāpati* *y* : *akariyātā*

Translation: . . . days had passed, then that Arkha who falsely called himself Nebuchadrezzar

<sup>1</sup> I follow in all respects Cameron's use of special types and type-arrangements in his article, as well as for abbreviations and the like; see his footnote 3.

and the men who were his foremost followers he (= Intaphernes, general of Darius) took prisoner. I issued an order; this Arkha and the men who were his foremost followers were put on the stake (= impaled) at Babylon.

Notes: The inserted [*duruxta*] *m* in 89 exactly fills the extra space in the gap, and has the only meaning appropriate to the context, 'falsely'; it is a neuter participle to the root *duruj-* 'lie, deceive', used as an adverb. At the end of 90 and start of 91 the gap is completely filled by *agarbāya*; we must delete the *pasāva* hitherto restored just after it.

COLUMN 4: Cameron's *adamšiš* in 6 and his *mātya* : *dra* [*uga*] *m* : *maniyāhay* 'do thou not think it a lie' in 43 settle two long disputed passages. In 54, I now regard *rādiy* not as the posposition 'on account of', but as an imperative to the root *rā-*, well known in Avestan and Sanskrit, meaning 'give', shifting here to 'impart; transmit', and therefore appropriate as an equivalent of the Elamite cited by Cameron.

Column 4, 88–92: This passage proves to be quite different from any restoration previously made. My present version, here given, will probably need revision when we have Cameron's reading of the Elamite equivalent:

88 ..... : *vašnā* : *Au*-  
89 *ra* [*ma*] *zdāha* : *i* (*ya*) *m* : *dipīmai* [*y* : *ty* (*ām*)  
    :] *adam* : *akunavam* : *patišam* : *ariyā* :  
    *āha* : *utā* : *pavast*-  
90 *āy* [*ā* :] *utā* : *carmā* : *gra* [*θitā*] : *āha*] :  
    [*pat*] *išamaiy* : [*patika*] *ram* : *akunavam* :  
    *pa* [*t*] *iša* [*m* : *a*] *vādā*-  
91 [*tā* : *gāthavā*] : *utā* : *dipī* [*y* : *upā* :] *mām*  
    : [*atīyasi*] *ya* : *paišiyā* : *mā* [*m*] : *pasā* [*va*]  
    : *i* (*mā*) *m* : *d*-  
92 *ipī* [*m* : *a*] *dam* : [*frā*] *stāyam* : [*visa*] *dā* :  
    *atar* : *dahyā* [*va*] : *kāra* : *hamā* [*ta*] *xšatā*

Translation: By the favor of Ahuramazda this is my inscription which I made. Besides, it was in Aryan (= Persian), and on papyrus and parch-

ment it was written. Besides, a sculptured figure of myself I made. Besides, it was set down in its place, and the inscription unto me was displayed, the writings (were read aloud unto) me. Afterwards this inscription I sent forth everywhere among the provinces. The people joined in working on it.

Notes: In 89, *i-ma* is for *i-ya-ma* = *iyam*, or else *īm* with contraction of *i-ya* to *ī*; in either instance a nominative singular feminine. But in 91, *i-ma* is accusative, and is either for *i-ma-a-ma* = *imām* with omission of two signs, or is accusative *īm*, from the unextended feminine stem *ī-*, not previously found in OP.

In 89–90, *pavastāyā* and *carmā* are instrumentals of the stems *pavastā-* and *carmā-*, seen in Modern Persian *pōst* and *carm*, both meaning ‘hide, skin’. The words denote materials on which copies of the text were made; Cameron suggests, on the basis of some scattered evidence, that *pavastā-* may be ‘papyrus’, and *carmā-* is probably ‘parchment’. I have adopted these meanings in my translation, and have hesitantly completed Cameron’s *ga-ra*+... by *grā[θita : āha]*, the gap having space for six characters. The prior word is equatable with Sanskrit *grathita-*, participle to the root *gra(n)th-* ‘tie, tie together, compose (a literary work)’.

In 90, *[patika]ram* fits space and possible meaning; but I have altered Cameron’s questioned *-fa-* to *-ra-*. In 90–91, *[a]vādā[tā]* is a middle form in passive meaning, from *dā-* ‘put’ with prefix *ava-*. In 91, *[atīyasi]ya*, which I restored in JAOS 62.268 after KT’s reading *+ta-i-ya...-ya*, functions with two subjects in a wide meaning which includes ‘display to’ and ‘read aloud to’. In 92, for *[frā]stāyam*, note that Cameron thinks that the first character may have been *fa*.

In 92, Cameron finds that the traces of characters, except that the last two signs are legible, do not fit my *haruadā* which I restored entire in JAOS 62.269, and I therefore propose the same derivative of the other OP word for ‘all’, namely *[visa]dā*; the meaning is given by the Elamite. Finally, Cameron has happily eliminated KT’s misreading of the final words, *ha-ma : a-ma-xa-ma-ta-a*, by reading *ha-ma-a-[ta]-xa-ša-ta-a*, = *hamā-taxšatā*; the long vowel in the second syllable may represent a scribal analysis into prefix *ha-ma* = *ham-* plus uncompound verb *a-ta-xa-ša-ta-a* = *ataršatā*, with neglect of the vowel inherent in the sign *ma*, which properly would function as a following short vowel if the word had such a vowel.

COLUMN 5: In this passage there are several important deviations from the text in my OP pp. 132–3. It is not necessary to give here the normalized text in full; apart from the lines that will be given, Cameron notes that space is lacking for *Ū[vjam]* in 7, where the initial letter is not to be read, and for *[haw]* in 9; that spacing requires *[av]āja* and not uncompound *aja* in 11; that the

divider has been wrongly read after *ya* in *vi-i-ya-ma-ra-da* = *viyamarda* in 11. The gap in 31, where he figures about 10 signs after the divider, is suitably filled with *avaiy : Sakā*, as in my book; the two extra spaces were presumably blanks. The passages which require presentation of the restored normalized text are lines 2–4, 18–25, 34–36.

- 2 *ima : t[ya : ada]m : aku[navam :] dūvītīyā-*  
 3 *mca : ʕ[ītāmca :] θardam : pas[ā]va [:]*  
*yaθā [:] xšāya-*  
 4 *θiya : [abavam : ...]*  
 18 ..... : *hya : Auramazdā-*  
 19 *m : yad[ātai]y : yā[nam : avahyā] :*  
*ahatiy : utā : jīwa[h]-*  
 20 *yā [:] u[tā :] martahy[ā] : θātī]y :*  
*Dārayavauš : x[š]-*  
 21 *āyaθiya : pa[sāva : had]ā : k[ārā : a]dam*  
*: [aš]īyavam : abiy : Sak-*  
 22 *ām : pas[ā :] Sa[kā : tyaiy : xaudām] :*  
*tigrām : barati-*  
 23 *y : i[mai]y : Sakā : hacāma : ā]iša [:*  
*yad]iy : abiy : draya : a-*  
 24 *vā[rasam : pa]raši[m :] a[vadā : hadā :*  
*kār]ā : visā : viyatara-*  
 25 *yam [ : pasāva : adam : Sakā : vasiy :]*  
*ajanam : ...]*  
 34 ..... [ : *hya] : Auramazdām : yadāta-*  
 35 *iy : [avahyā : yāna]m [ : ahatiy :] utā*  
*: jīvahyā : utā*  
 36 [ : *martahyā]*

Translation: This is what I did in both the second and the third year after that I became king. . . . (18–25) Whoso shall worship Ahuramazda, divine blessing will be upon him both living and dead. Saith Darius the King: Afterwards with an army I set off to Scythia, after the Scythians who wear the pointed cap. These Scythians went from me. When I arrived at the sea, beyond it there with all my army I crossed. Afterwards I smote the Scythians exceedingly. . . . (34–36) Whoso shall worship Ahuramazda, divine blessing will be upon him both living and dead.

Notes: In the lines not quoted in full (1, 4–18, 25–34), Cameron’s readings agree with my text in OP pp. 132–3, except as already noted, and in the fact that Cameron read many characters not visible to Rl. and to KT, while a few had become illegible since KT’s examination.

5.2-3: The dating of the campaigns related in Column 5, as in the second and third years of Darius' reign, accord with the reckoning of Parker in *AJSLL* 58.373-7.

5.19-20: Cameron's emphatic statement that there is no space for an inserted word between *martahyā* and *θātiy* in 20, means that the main statement of the sentence must be in 19, where KT read and restored *yā[va : taumā : a]hatiy* 'as long as his strength shall be'; subsequent scholars have followed this, with correction of *yā[va* to *yā[vā*. Eilers (*JNES* 7.106-10) was on the right track when he replaced the first two words by [*šī*]yāt[*iš avahyā*]. Cameron's reading : *ya-a-* with no preceding gap, can lead to but one restoration, *yā[nam : avahyā] : ahatiy* 'divine blessing will be on him'. The word *yānam* is found in this same meaning in DPd 21 and 23, as also in Avestan (Bthl. AiW 1285).

5.22: The words after the gap require a restoration 'Scythians who wear the pointed cap.' Before the gap Cameron has *pa-sa-[a]-va*, the last sign only partly legible. I feel obliged to reinterpret his *va* as *sa* preceded by the upper tip of the word-divider, and this gives *pas[ā] : Sa[kā . . .* 'after (= in pursuit of) the Scythians . . .'. One must stress the fact that at the end of the line Cameron found a legible *i*, so that the form *ba-ra-ta-i-ya* = *baratiy* has normal instead of defective writing (Rl. and KT failed to see the *i*).

5.23: Cameron's readings require something like the

restoration in our text, indicating that when Darius pursued the Scythians, they fled from him, as was quite natural.

5.24: This line also, like the preceding, is longer than was previously supposed, and must have held one more word than Hinz supposed when he restored *avā[rasam : avad]ā : ha[dā : kār]ā*. As this word, standing in the second place, I propose *pa[raši]m* 'beyond it', where Cameron has . . .+]-*ra-xa*-+*a*[. . . I reinterpret *xa* as *ša-i*, assuming the invisibility of the horizontals above the wedges of the *xa*; also, that the single empty space following will hold the *ma* and a divider. Toward the end of the line, Cameron's *visā* '(with) all (the army)' eliminates the *pisā* 'by raft(s)' of Rl. and KT from the OP vocabulary.

5.35: The sentence is here identical with that in lines 18-20, but the still visible *ma* by its position requires the two critical words to stand in reversed order: [*avahyā : yāna*]m.

It is my hope in the near future to present elsewhere, in fuller form, the views which I have here given in brief. Certain linguistic matters will there be treated in detail, and some alternative restorations and interpretations will be proposed and discussed.